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Published in the United States of America by Builders of the Adytum and simultaneously in the Dominion of Canada by Ridout and Maybe, Toronto 1, Canada.

New and Revised Edition
Printed in the United States of America

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TAROT FUNDAMENTALS

LESSON NO. 7

BUILDERS OF THE ADYTUM

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Lesson Seven

SUBCONSCIOUSNESS

Before you read this lesson, study carefully the symbolism of Key 2, the High Priestess. Remember, Tarot uses the universal language of pictorial symbolism with which the deeper part of your mind is perfectly familiar. One purpose of the Tarot Keys is to evoke thought, and by looking at a Key before you begin to read our explanations, you bring closer to the surface the knowledge already present in the depths of your subconsciousness. This will make it easier for you to grasp the significance of the written words. Devote at least five minutes to this preparatory practice. Longer whenever you have time.

Among the meanings of the number is **subordination.** This word gives a clue to the relationship existing between subconsciousness, represented by Key 2, and objective mind, or self-consciousness, represented by the Magician.

The symbolism of Key 1 shows the Magician controlling the powers of subconsciousness which are always amenable to his suggestive influence. It is because of this that you are able to employ these Keys to bring into vigorous manifestation the latent forces of your inner life. The principle involved has been explained in Lesson 3 of SEVEN STEPS. Review that lesson, and Lesson 2 of the same course, in connection with your present study.

The psychological law there stated, that subconsciousness is perfectly amenable to control by suggestion, makes it obvious that what you must consider very carefully is **how** you use your self-conscious mind. For it determines what you plant in subconsciousness.

Subconsciousness, you will recall, is represented by the garden in Key 1. The fertile soil of this garden will grow **any** seed planted by the Magician. If he plants careless observations and incorrect reasoning, the weeds of conscious thought, subconsciousness will develop these seeds of error a thousandfold, with all sorts of uncomfortable consequences. On the other hand, if you learn to concentrate, to make your mental imagery clear and definite, if you make accurate observations from which you draw correct inferences, the seed you plant in your subconscious garden will bear fruit in the renewal, revivification and regeneration of your personality.

The ability of subconsciousness to develop seed ideas in this way may be formulated thus: Subconsciousness is possessed of perfect powers of deductive reasoning. If you are not certain as to the difference between inductive and deductive reasoning, consult a dictionary before proceeding farther. Always, when you study, have a good dictionary at hand, for you will need it often in the course of this instruction. You will find that the practice of making sure of the precise meaning and use of words will be of inestimable benefit to you in the orderly organization of your mental processes.

Geometrically, the number 2 is the **line,** the extension of the **point** (number 1). This is related to the subconscious power just mentioned whereby the consequences of conscious thought and observation are developed. Note that the extension of the central point of a circle into a diameter (an extension in two opposite directions) divides the circle into two parts, each the exact duplicate of the other. In this power of duplication may be perceived the basic function of subconsciousness, memory.

This brings us to a third psychological principle: Subconsciousness keeps a perfect record of all experience and therefore has perfect memory. Not only does it retain every experience of a single person, but it holds also a summary of the race experience, and this is one of the sources of our intuitions and of our scientific discoveries.

When Hebrew letters were scratched rudely on stone, the character for ג, Gimel, the letter printed on Key 2, was a picture of a bow. This is one reason Gimel follows Beth in the alphabet.

The primitive character for Beth was an arrow-head, and, in the development of weapons, bows follow arrows. Men began by throwing their darts by hand. The invention of the bow came later.

A bow speeds an arrow to its mark, yet it is secondary when it is considered as a weapon suggested by the dart or arrow. A bow, moreover, **extends** the range of an arrow. So the subconsciousness represented by Gimel carries your conscious determinations to successful conclusions. It makes your decisions "hit the mark". Yet the activities of subconsciousness are derived from, and are secondary to, the operations of self-consciousness which are pictured by Key 1.

Subconsciousness is the propulsive, driving force in human personality. Keep in mind this idea of **propulsion.** Link it up with the noun propeller, that which drives a boat or an airplane. Self-consciousness aims and steers. The motive force is provided by subconsciousness.

As a symbol the bow is feminine and the characteristics of subconsciousness are those which, from time immemorial, have been associated with the feminine sex. Subconsciousness is the

protective, maternal, nutritive, reproductive aspect of consciousness, always represented in esoteric literature under the guise of feminine symbols. Among these, besides the bow, are the ark, the crescent moon, the cup, the ship, the sistrum of Isis, almonds, ovals, lozenges (diamond-shaped figures), and many others, including some we shall find in the series of Tarot Keys.

The letter-name, Gimel, means "camel". The early forms of the letter may have suggested the name because the head and neck of a camel bear some resemblance to a bent bow. Again, the Hebrew verb gawmel, spelt with the same letters (גמל) as the noun Gimel, means: 1. to carry a load; 2. to ripen, as fruits; 3. to recompense, whether for good or for evil, so that it includes the ideas of reward and of punishment. All these meanings are connected with the action of subconsciousness.

One familiar activity of subconsciousness is "mind-wandering". This enables us, when we fall into a state of reverie, to pass from one thought to another until we have traversed a vast field of ideas. Until we learn to control this power of associating image with image, it interferes with concentration and with all other directed use of our mental powers. It is like a camel running wild. When we learn to drive it, this same power of association will take us quickly to any chosen goal.

As the seat of memory, subconsciousness "carries the load" of our personal experience. It bears a greater burden than this, because subconsciousness is a universal phase of the Life-power's activity, and "personal" subconsciousness is merely a particular manifestation, through a single organism, of this great and all-inclusive universal subconsciousness.

Hence, when we learn how, we may gain access to the records of **all** experience by tapping the cosmic subconscious memories. By this means it is possible to arrive at accurate reconstructions of the past. Sometimes only the general principles are recovered, and the discoveries of scientists are often simply this, as more than one of them has admitted. Occasionally the particular details of some ancient era are also recovered, and occult literature contains many authentic examples of this type of recovery.

Other implications of the letter-name Gimel are transportation; motion from place to place; movement to and fro, as of the regular journeys of caravans over trade routes. Hence, commerce, change, reciprocity, interchange, alternation, correlation, correspondence and communication, dissemination of information, consequently, education and science. Study all these words with the aid of a dictionary. They describe your subconsciousness and its powers.

In the esoteric doctrine of Israel, Gimel is said to correspond to the Moon which is a "ship of the skies", just as a camel is a "ship of the desert". The Moon center in the human brain is the pituitary body, which, besides the function known to physiologists, is understood by occultists to act as a transmitting station through which the mental states of self-consciousness are relayed to centers of the nervous system located in the physical body below the brain.

Among the ideas suggested by the Moon are: reflection; periodicity (because it waxes and wanes); association, accompaniment, correlation (because the Moon is a satellite, consort or follower of the earth, and in like manner subconsciousness follows the lead of self-consciousness).

As a crescent, the Moon suggests a bow, the original form of Gimel. Thus it is connected with the goddess named Diana by the Romans and Artemis by the Greeks. Diana is a huntress, and to hunt is to follow, to inquire, to pursue. Even while we sleep subconsciousness is reviewing all our experiences, ruminating (like a camel chewing its cud) over what we have sensed, felt and reasoned. During sleep this nocturnal mental luminary carries on the mental processes which lead to the consequences of what we have observed, felt and consciously reasoned out during the day.

Diana or Artemis was a virgin goddess, and because she presided over child-birth she was closely related to Hecate, who, for the ancient Greeks, combined the characteristics of moon goddess, earth goddess, and queen of the underworld of shades, the abode of the dead. Hecate had a share in the rulership of earth and sea; gave aid in war, in athletic contests and in hunting; protected herds and children; but she was particularly the goddess of magic, mystery and occult powers generally. She also presided over the meeting place at which roads cross. Indeed, it is principally from the attributes of Hecate that the symbolism of the second Tarot Key is derived. **All the Powers attributed to these moon goddesses are actual, living powers of your subconsciousness.**

One key word for this picture, based on its connection with Gimel and the Moon, is **association.** Not only ordinary association of ideas within the limits of your personal mind, but a wider kind of association, symbolized by the camel because the journeys of caravans connect distant places. **Subconsciousness has perfect connection with all points in space.**

This law is the basis of the phenomenon of telepathy. It is also the law which will put you in touch with your own personal Teacher when you have developed to a point where you are ready for higher instruction. This same law has many other applications in practical occultism.

During your practice period this week, after coloring Key 2 in accordance with the directions given at the end of the lesson, try to get the "feel" of the powers of your subconsciousness. Try to realize that everything you think and feel, as it is recorded on your own scroll, is also influencing the universal substance within which you live and move and have your being. There is not a single thought or emotion which is completely private. If you feel misunderstood, your family, friends and business associates will be influenced by this subtle emanating substance and respond in like measure. If instead, you use the Magician to focus your attention on attempts to understand others, with feelings of good-will, subconsciousness will transform your relationships. The results will be seen on all levels of experience. Use the

High Priestess to help you recognize the unity of all life. You share the universal substance with all creation. There is no real separation. Analyze your environmental conditions in terms of your habitual subconscious pattern responses, and it will help you to recognize the need for transmutation. Tarot practice will help you to reshape your attitudes—which in turn will transform your world.

COLORING INSTRUCTIONS

KEY 2. THE HIGH PRIESTESS

Yellow:	Left foreground, small space at right foreground.
Green:	Palms on curtain behind High Priestess (not centers).
Blue:	Background, from yellow foreground up. Robe. The robe should have white in it also, where it shimmers down in front and out of the picture, to represent flowing water.
Gray:	Throne; veil background.
White:	Inner garment; cross on the High Priestess' breast; head drapery; right pillar; centers of palms; Hebrew letter, ב on left pillar.
Brown:	Scroll (diluted to look like parchment).
Silver:	Crown.
Red:	Pomegranates (seeds deeper tint than pulp and skins).